ABSTRACT

The present invention comprises a unique starter assembly for a gas discharge lamp. The starter assembly comprises a main current path with a first leg connected to one electrode of a gas discharge lamp, and a second leg connected to a second electrode of the gas discharge lamp. A starting current path is provided between the first and second electrode, and comprises an magnetic switch. The magnetic switch is actuated by an electromagnet controlled by a control circuit. The control unit may be programmed with the start time required for a particular lamp design. In an alternative embodiment, the starter assembly further comprises a radio frequency identification system. The radio frequency identification system includes a gas discharge lamp transponder. The lamp transponder is used to communicate specific lamp information to the control circuit. The control circuit may then modify the start time for that lamp based on this information.